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# ILLINOIS COAL FACTS

## **What is Coal?**

Coal is a black or brownish-black rock that is made from plants that lived and died about 100 to 400 million years ago. Because coal is made of once living plants, it is called a fossil fuel.

Illinois has the nation's largest reserves of bituminous coal.

## **More interesting facts about Illinois coal.**

Coal was first discovered in Illinois more than 300 years ago.

Mining began in Illinois almost 200 years ago.

Bituminous coal underlies 37,000 square miles of Illinois – about 65 percent of the state's surface.

Illinois' coal reserves contain more Btu's than the oil reserves of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait.

Nearly 72 percent of Illinois coal is sold to out-of-state utilities.

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The Illinois coal industry contributes \$1 billion to the Illinois economy annually.

Illinois' bituminous coal has high energy values – between 10,000 and 14,000 Btu per pound.

In 1981, Illinois recorded the first fatality-free year in mining history.

In Illinois two types of underground mining are used: room and pillar mining and longwall mining.

It takes about one pound of Illinois coal to produce enough electricity to run a television for five hours.

15% of current Illinois coal production is from surface mining.

Illinois is recognized as the leader in prime farmland reclamation.

## ILLINOIS COAL

*Discover the Power*

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Office of Coal Development

[www.illinoiscoal.biz](http://www.illinoiscoal.biz)

### State of Illinois

Rod R. Blagojevich, Governor

Department of Commerce  
and Economic Opportunity

Jack Lavin, Director

